

1-8

1706

THE
MUSEUM



CHRISTIANITY

The Sum of Christianity

IN A
CONFESSION
OF
F A I T H

BY
W
DANIEL WILCOX.

Deliver'd at his Ordination to the
Ministry. September 15. 1703.

Now Publish'd at the Request of many.

L O N D O N:

Printed for John Clark, at the Bible and Crown in
the Old Change, 1706.

The Sum of Christianity

IN A

CONFESSION

OF

F A I T H



DANIEL DEFOE

Delivered at his Ordination to the
Ministry September 15. 1703.

Now Published at the Request of many.

L O N D O N

Printed for J. Sturges at the Bible and Church
Lane 1703.

A
C O N F E S S I O N
O F
F A I T H, &c.

*The Faith I profess, and for which
shall earnestly contend as once deli-
ver'd unto the Saints, I shall endea-
vour to comprize in the following Ar-
ticles.*

I. **F**Orasmuch as the Being of a
Deity is the Foundation of
all Religion: I BELIEVE, That
there is one Only, Living and True
God, a most Pure and Glorious, In-
comprehensible Spirit, necessarily
possessing all possible Perfections, and
therein the highest most consummate
Blessedness; Eternal, Immense, Im-
mutable.

mutable, Almighty, Omniscient, Independent; infinitely Holy, Just and Good: Of whom, and thro' whom, and to whom are all Things; to whom Adoration and Worship is only due, and to be pay'd by Angels and Men.

II. I BELIEVE the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and because He has there Reveal'd it: Therefore

III. I BELIEVE that in the same undivided Godhead there are Three Persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; distinguish'd as to order of Subsistence, and by their Personal Properties: The Father *Begetting*, the Son *Be-gotten*, the Holy Ghost *Proceeding*. That each of them is God most High, and all Three but One, the same in Substance, and Equal in Power, Eternity, and Glory.

IV. I

IV. I BELIEVE that in the Beginning, from a meer Act of his Goodness, and for his Pleasure and Glory, God did by his powerful Word create the World: Making all Things of Nothing either *absolutely* or *mediately*, Visible and Invisible, Heavens, Earth, and Sea, with the vast variety of Creatures in all; in the space of six Days finishing his Work, and upon Review pronouncing them all very Good, as agreeable to his Design and Will, and instituting the Sabbath in Commemoration of his Rest.

V. I BELIEVE that Last and Best of all his visible Works God made Man, in a peculiar Manner forming our first Parents, of a compound Nature Spiritual and Material, Soul and Body, perfectly Holy being after his own Image, but yet in a mutable State: In which it seem'd Good to their All-wise Creator

tor to hold them for a Time on Trial, unconfirm'd, to see how they would carry it towards their Maker and Sovereign, that they might be Reward-ed according to their choice.

VI. In this State, as Man a rational Creature is capable of moral Government, to be mov'd by the Springs of Hope and Fear: God was pleas'd in admirable Wisdom and Goodness, to cast his Law into the most engaging Form, entring into Covenant with innocent *Adam*, as the common Parent of all Mankind, promising him everlasting Life and Happiness, on condition of Perfect, Personal, and Perpetual Obedience to all his Commands, particularly That, *Not to Eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; and threatening Death in all its Kinds, in Case of Disobedience.

VII. I BELIEVE that in that original Treaty between God and
Man,

Man, *Adam* contracted in the Name of his Offspring, and so as the natural and moral Head of the whole Race, had he stood, had propagated a Holy Nature unto us, but if he Sinn'd, we were to be depriv'd of it, and liable to the same Misery with him.

VIII. I BELIEVE that our first Parents hearkning to the Temptation of the Devil, one of the Angels that had before fall'n, by wilful Transgression soon broke the Law of their Creator, and so fell too from their original Innocence and Glory, into a most deplorable State, drawing all their Posterity after them, that thro' all the Ages of Time in a natural ordinary way were to descend from 'em.

IX. I BELIEVE that hence we are Conceiv'd and Born in Sin, having an Hereditary Corruption derived to us instead of Original
 B Righte-

Righteousness ; and as Guilty and Deprav'd, are all *by Nature* subjected to the Threatning of the Law, the Wrath of God, and Power of Satan : Expos'd to numberless Evils in this Life, to certain Death, and beyond it to an everlasting Hell.

X. Thus low is Man sunk ! And never able to recover himself, by regaining his Holiness, or satisfying Justice : And without Blood there is no Remission.

XI. I BELIEVE, from all Eternity God foresaw this, and resolves not to leave the lost World inevitably to Perish without Help or Hope. Viewing all Mankind as Bleeding in *Adam*, he out of the corrupt Mass will have a People for his Praise ; and to make it sure, how far gone soever, from his meer and sovereign Good Pleasure and Grace, he elects a certain Number to everlasting Life, both as to End
and

and Means, Holiness and Heaven:
And enters into an Agreement with
the Eternal Word, by Dying to bring
about the Great Salvation.

XII. Immediately on the Fall,
God was pleas'd to open the kind
Design, publishing the provided Re-
deemer under the Character of the
Seed of the Woman, by whom Sa-
tan was to be conquer'd, and our
lapsed State restor'd: And from
thenceforth dealing with Man, not
according to the Rigor of a broken
Law, but on Terms of Mercy, for
the sake of Christ's Undertaking af-
terwards to be perform'd, who is
gradually reveal'd at different Pe-
riods, to keep alive the Memory of
our intended Recovery, and the Ex-
pectation of his Coming.

XIII. I BELIEVE, in the ful-
ness of Time fix'd in the Counsels of
Heaven, God so loved the World,
that he sent his eternal only begot-

ten Son, promis'd in the beginning, to accomplish our Redemption. As 'twas requisite that the same Nature that Sinn'd should also suffer, and the Children to be redeem'd were Partakers of Flesh and Blood : He also himself likewise took part of the same, that being *Emmanuel*, God with us, he might be a most suitable and all-sufficient Saviour. Tho' in the form of God, and without Robbery equal with him : By amazing Condescension he became Man ; assuming the Human Nature, Soul and Body, into a Personal Union with himself ; being conceived by the Power of the Holy Ghost in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, and born of her without Sin : Having his Name sent from Heaven, *Jesus*, the Saviour, who is also Christ.

XIV. I BELIEVE him to be the true and promised *Messiah*, and that there is no other to be looked for than he that was born at *Betlehem*,
and

and appear'd in the World about Seventeen Hundred Years ago: In whom the Scriptures are fulfill'd, the Types and Shadows answer'd, and who hath the Words of eternal Life.

XV. I BELIEVE that whilst on Earth he was Holy, Harmless, and Undeiled; never did the least Iniquity, nor was Guile found in his Mouth. A perfect Example of finless Obedience, fulfilling all Righteousness in his Life: And at last thro' the Malice of Satan, and Wickedness of Men, according to the determinate Counsel and Fore-knowledge of God, he was brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, Cut off, but not for himself, Dying on the Cross in our room and stead, an atoning meritorious Sacrifice, to satisfy Divine Justice, redeem us from the Curse of the Law, unbar the Treasures of Grace, and make way for Mercy to Reign, in bringing many Sons out of this lost World to Glory.

XVI. Be-

XVI. Being Dead by a real separation of Soul and Body, to compleat his Humiliation he is also bury'd, his Body entomb'd, tho' he saw no Corruption, whilst he goes in Spirit to the World of Spirits, remaining for a time in a separate State: But as it was not possible for him to be holden of Death, the third Day he rose again the Life and Hope of lost Sinners, being *delivered* for our Offences, and *raised* again for our Justification. And having after his Passion shewn himself alive to his chosen Apostles, by many infallible Proofs, thro' the space of forty Days, speaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and promising the Spirit as their abiding Teacher, Comforter and Guide: He takes his leave of them with a Blessing, in their Sight ascending to Heaven, where he sits Enthron'd at the right Hand of God, as Prophet, Priest and King of his Church, and Lord of all: Able to save to the uttermost all that come
unto

unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.

XVII. I BELIEVE that *thus* it behoved the Redeemer to die, and *thus* to rise again according to the Scriptures, and so to enter into Glory: And that God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, and hath inacted a Covenant of Grace, the same for substance in every Age, tho' differently Administred, and in different Degrees of Light: That 'tis the last and best Edition we are now under, wherein for the sake of his Son, and together with him, he freely offers Pardon of Sin and everlasting Life, to apostate Guilty Perishing Man; commanding all where the Gospel comes unfeignedly to Repent of Sin, and heartily Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so return unto God by him, to which, as the transforming Energy and Aids of his Spirit are necessary to incline and draw; to answer all
Diffi-

Difficulties, This is the kind Message he sends to such as are bidden: *Come, for all Things are now ready.*

XVIII. I BELIEVE that all that thus come back unto God in Christ, are with purpose of Heart to cleave to him, and walk with him, not after the Flesh but after the Spirit, as Holiness is the necessary way to Heaven.

XIX. To this end, I BELIEVE that the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, did inspire the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists, in inditing the Scriptures of the *Old and New Testament*; which therefore are of Divine Authority, the true and faithful Sayings of God, containing what is his good, and perfect, and acceptable Will concerning us, and so committed to the Church as the standing, only, sufficient Rule of Faith and Obedience, to which all are concern'd and ought to

to have recourse, to learn the great Things they are to Know, Believe and Do, in order to Salvation : How to glorifie God here, and enjoy him forever.

XX. I BELIEVE that, besides the Apostles whose extraordinary Office was to cease with them, Christ hath appointed a standing Order of Men, Pastors and Teachers, to open and apply the sacred Oracles, and administer his Ordinances according to his Word : Preaching the everlasting. Gospel for the Conversion of Sinners, and Edification of Saints ; and solemnly separate others to the same Office and Work, in which he hath promis'd to be with them always to the end of the World, that his saving Design may still go on tho' by different Hands, and the Deaths of Ministers may not prove the Grave of the Ministry.

C

XXI. I

XXI. I BELIEVE God's solemn Declaration, that he hath no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but rather that he would Turn and Live : And is serious in his Counsels, Exhortations, and whatever Means he makes use of in order thereto. That therefore they will be most inexcusable who finally Perish under the Gospel, as it is eminently the Ministration of the Spirit, whose Influence at least in a lower Degree, is vouchsaf'd to all where the Word is Preach'd, which tho' not sufficient for Conversion, has a Tendency to it, and God withdraws not his Spirit till resisted and oppos'd, making obstinate ungrateful Sinners a Day, wherein to know the Things of their Peace, before they are hid from their Eyes.

XXII. I

XXII. I BELIEVE that such is the Vanity of Man's Mind, and Corruption of his Heart, the Power and Prevalency of Sin and Temptation: As that, after all the Arguments in the Gospel, propos'd by Man in the clearest Light, and press'd with the greatest Warmth and Agreeableness of Affection: There is moreover an absolute Necessity of the attractive Power, and special supernatural Grace of God, to convert and bring home Sinners to himself by his Son; as 'tis of God that any are in Christ Jesus; that as all that Perish must charge their Destruction upon themselves, so as many as are Recover'd, must ascribe their Salvation to rich and free adorable Grace.

XXIII. I BELIEVE a Divine Providence extending to all the World, whereby in a most holy,
C 2
wise,

wise, and powerful Manner, God continues to Rule whatever he has made : That it is especially exercis'd towards his Church, and this by the Hand of a Mediator, as the Government was to be upon his Shoulders, and all Power is given him in Heaven and Earth, as the Reward of his Sufferings, and for the Ends of Redemption.

XXIV. I BELIEVE that all God's chosen shall sooner or later, be effectually call'd into a Participation of Christ and his saving Benefits : As he has said, *That all that the Father giveth him shall come unto him, being made willing in the Day of his Power.*

XXV. That whom God calls he freely justifies, according to the Tenor of the New Covenant : Pardoning all their Sins that are past, whereby till then they are Children

dren of Wrath even as others ; and accepting them as Righteous in his Sight, by and for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them, upon their believing, thankful Acceptance of him as offer'd in the Gospel.

XXVI. I BELIEVE that hereupon, they are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but adopted into the Family of Heaven, having the Power and Privilege given them to become the Sons of God, and entitled as Heirs to the glorious Inheritance reserv'd for such.

XXVII. And because they are Sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son to dwell in their Hearts, as the Seal and Earnest of the purchased Possession, and to carry on their Meetness for it: By this Spirit they are Sanctify'd in every part, and so freed from the Power and Reign of Sin, and gradually free-
ing

ing from its sad Remains ; made a peculiar People unto God, through the Mediation of Christ acceptably to Worship and Serve him here, in the way to the blisful Enjoyment of him.

XXVIII. I BELIEVE that the Just shall live by Faith: Be kept from total and final Apostacy, as the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, *THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS*: And they shall be always so to the best Purposes, that whom he Justifies he may also Glorifie.

XXIX. I BELIEVE that Christians ought to assemble themselves together for Publick Worship, on the Lord's Day, according to the Example and Practice of the Apostles and first Disciples, and the Mind of Christ: In which
they

they may hope for his special Presence and Blessing, as he has said, That where Two or Three are gathered together in his Name, there he is and will be in the midst of them.

XXX. That such worshipping Assemblies, under a regular Pastor, having the Word purely Preached, and Ordinances duly Administred ; are proper Churches, and Parts of the Holy Catholick Church ; which as visible, is made up of all that profess the true Religion all the World over : Christ's visible Kingdom, of which he is only universal Head, to whom it belongs to give Laws to bind the Conscience, and appoint Officers and Ordinances which he will Own and Bless.

XXXI. I BELIEVE that Christ will always have a Church in the World,

World, against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail, as built upon himself its supporting Rock; and to which, by the new Birth, shall continually be added such as shall be Saved : And of the Elect thus Sanctify'd consists the invisible Church.

XXXII. Among whom I BELIEVE the Communion of Saints: not only as to external Worship and Ordinances, but as Members of the same mystical Body, vitally united to Christ the Head, animated by one Spirit, even as they are called and imbark'd in one Hope of the heavenly Glory, the great Scope and End of their Calling: Having one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thro' all, and in them all: And as to lesser Differences, forbearing one another in Love, and endeavouring to keep

keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.

XXXIII. I BELIEVE that Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are the only Sacraments of Christ's Appointment under the Gospel; to continue in force to the end of Time, the initiating, and confirming Seal of the New Covenant, in which Covenant, all that are competently instructed, and credibly profess their Faith and Repentance, and so their willing Consent thereto, are by the washing of Water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be admitted as visible Members of Christ's Church; and also in the same manner, their Infant Offspring, as the Promise is to them, and to their Children, which is to be done but *Once*. But Baptized, Adult Believers are *often* to partake of the Sacramental Bread and Wine, the Communi-

D

on

on of the Body and Blood of Christ, for their Spiritual Nourishment and Growth in Grace ; and doing this in Remembrance of their Lord, shew forth his Death till He come.

XXXIV. I BELIEVE the Immortality of the Soul, and a Future State of Rewards and Punishment, as to both Eternal : That it is appointed unto all Men Home to Christ's Coming, once to Die, and the Business of their Lives, to prepare for it. That at Death, the Souls of Penitent, Persevering Believers, being made perfect in Holiness, do immediately enter into the Joy of their Lord ; whilst the Souls of the Wicked, that have no Part in Christ, are cast into Hell, the Place of Torment, where the Wrath of God is poured out without Mixture.

XXXV. I

XXXV. I BELIEVE that God hath appointed a Day wherein he will Judge the World in Righteousness, by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead.

XXXVI. In Order to which, I BELIEVE that in that Day there shall be a Resurrection of the Bodies of all, both Just and Unjust, agreeably to the Scriptures and the Power of God ; and all Nations and Persons be gather'd before the Tribunal of Christ as Final Judge of Quick and Dead. And tho' the Righteous and Wicked here live mixt, he will then divide the one from the other, placing the Righteous on his Right Hand, and the Wicked on the Left, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats.

D 2

After

After which, as King, from his Glorious Throne, He will bespeak his Friends on his Right Hand in the most endearing manner, saying, " Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World." And with a Voice like Thunder pronounce This Dreadful Doom on those on the Left, " Depart from me ye Cursed, to Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels:" Upon which Execution shall be swift, and These shall go away into Everlasting Punishment, Wrath beyond Expression Great, and never to End: But the Righteous into Life Eternal, and so shall be ever with the Lord.

To all this, as Revealed by God, who cannot lye, by an unfeigned Assent, I say I BELIEVE.

And

And in Testimony that I do so, I moreover by a Deliberate, Free, and I hope Sincere Consent, take this God alone, Father Son and Holy Spirit, to be my God, Portion and Happiness. The Author of my Being, from whom I and all Mankind have revolted, and with whom there is Forgiveness to encourage Sinners to return unto Him: to be my reconciled Father; and Jesus Christ for my Lord and All-sufficient Saviour; the Holy Ghost for my Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide; and the Holy Scriptures, for the Rule of my Faith, Desires, and Walk: And repenting of all Sin, of Nature and Life, I likewise devote and give up my self to God, in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten, to be his Own, his Subject, his Servant; to Love him above all, and Live to him, and for him; resolving in
his

his Strength to Watch and Fight against all the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and my own Flesh, and follow the Captain of my Salvation in Faith and Holiness even to the Death: Relying on his Sacrifice and Intercession, Power, and Grace, to bring me to everlasting Life and Glory.

This is the Faith I profess: The Truths I own and shall labour to defend, the Gospel I BELIEVE and shall always Preach; laying no other Foundation than what is laid, Christ Jesus; desiring to know nothing, but Jesus Christ and him Crucify'd, and the Truth as it is in Jesus. And whatever Trials I may be called to for his sake, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. To him for the Service of his Church, I dedicate my Strength, my Time, my Life: In his Hands I

en-

entrust my Soul, my Hopes, and all my Concerns for both Worlds, and shall endeavour to perswade others to do so. And the Lord grant I may find Mercy to be faithful in the Ministry I am here to receive from him, in a Sense of the Account to be given to him; That after I have Preached to others, I my self may not be a Cast-a-way: But taking heed to my self, and to my Doctrin, may be able to give up my Account with Joy, in the Presence of my Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

In his Name I humbly go forth to the awful Work, on him I depend for Assistance, Acceptance, and all my Success: O my God, Redeemer and Sanctifyer! Let my own and Hearers eternal Salvation, eternally redound to the Praise of the Glory of thy Grace. *Amen, and Amen.*

THE END.

entrust my Soul, my Hopes, and
all my Concerns for both Worlds,
and shall endeavour to perfwade o-
thers to do so. And the Lord grant
I may find Mercy to be faithful in
the Ministry I am here to receive from
him, in a Sense of the Account to be
given to him; That after I have
Preached to others, I may tell my
not be a Cast-away: But taking heed
to my self, and to my Doctrine, may
be able to give up my Account with
Joy, in the Presence of my Lord Je-
sus Christ at his coming.

In his Name I humbly go forth to
the awful Work, on him I depend
for Assistance, Acceptance, and all
my Success: O my God, Redeem-
er and Sanctifier! Let my own and
Heirs eternal Salvation, eternally
redound to the Praise of the Glory
of thy Grace, Amen.



THE END

